

History route 2

Higher level and standard level

Paper 1 – peacemaking, peacekeeping – international relations 1918–1936

Friday 13 November 2015 (morning)

1 hour

Instructions to candidates

- Do not open this examination paper until instructed to do so.
- Answer all the questions.
- The maximum mark for this examination paper is **[25 marks]**.

Read all the sources carefully and answer all the questions that follow.

Sources in this paper have been edited: word additions or explanations are shown in square brackets []; substantive deletions of text are indicated by ellipses ... ; minor changes are not indicated.

These sources and questions relate to the Paris Peace Treaties: Versailles (June 1919).

Source A Count von Brockdorff-Rantzau, the leader of the German Peace Delegation, in a letter to the president of the Paris Conference, Georges Clemenceau, on the subject of peace terms (May 1919).

We came to Versailles in the expectation of receiving a peace proposal based on the agreed principles. We were firmly resolved to do everything in our power with a view of fulfilling the grave obligations which we had undertaken. We hoped for the peace of justice which had been promised to us.

We were aghast [horrified] when we read in documents the demands made upon us. The more deeply we examined the spirit of this treaty, the more convinced we became of the impossibility of carrying it out. The demands of this treaty are more than the German people can bear ... Germany, thus cut in pieces and weakened, must declare herself ready in principle to bear all the war expenses of her enemies, which would exceed many times over the total amount of German State and private assets.

Source B Alan Sharp, a professor of International History, writing in the article “The Big Four: Peacemaking in Paris in 1919” in the British journal *History Review* (2009).

One of the strange features of the settlement was that it left defeated Germany no longer hemmed in [encircled] by great powers as it had been in 1914 and hence, potentially, in a stronger position. Whilst Germany in 1919 might be temporarily weakened by its losses and the terms of the treaty, the only great power with whom it now shared a common border was France, which had been weakened by spending a much greater proportion of its young men to gain victory. Whereas German industry was untouched and its debts internal, France faced the immense expense of restoring the devastated battlefields of the Western Front and repaying loans to America and Britain. In place of Austria-Hungary and Russia, Germany now found itself surrounded by weaker states.

Source C

Margaret MacMillan, a professor of History, in a lecture entitled “The Uses and Abuses of History, 1919 to Present” (2004).

The Germans hated the Treaty of Versailles. It became known as the “diktat”, the treaty that was signed at the point of a gun ... The Germans did not believe they had lost and they did not think, therefore, that any terms that involved Germany paying a penalty would be fair. They came to fix on one thing in particular in the Treaty of Versailles and that was the clauses that bound them to pay ... The one that became the infamous one is Article 231, which says that Germany accepts responsibility for the war; the second clause, Article 232, says that what Germany pays will be based on Germany’s capacity to pay. The German Foreign Ministry made a conscious decision to attack Article 231 and throughout the 1920s devoted itself to pouring out propaganda about the Treaty of Versailles: about how unfair it was, about how unjust it was.

Source D

LS Srivastava and VP Joshi, professors of Political Science, writing in the academic book *International Relations* (2005).

Under Article 231 of the Treaty, Germany was held responsible for the loss and damage caused by the war. Article 232 imposed upon Germany the consequent liability for payment of reparations ... The Treaty of Versailles, according to the Germans, was a dictated peace imposed upon them by the victors, not negotiated ... Germans also complained that the Treaty of Versailles was unjust and the terms of the treaty were unfair. Germany was asked to pay reparations beyond her capacity. She was forced to surrender her overseas possessions and other territories. In fact, Germany was deprived of everything and the Treaty of Versailles aimed at extracting the last drop of blood ... The accusation that the Treaty of Versailles was unjust loses force because many provisions of the Treaty were substantially reduced when it was implemented.

Source E

Harold Wahl, a newspaper cartoonist, depicts Germany being presented with the Allied ultimatum, in the cartoon “Germany surrenders or else” in the US newspaper *The Sacramento Bee* (1920).

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The letter on the bayonet reads: “We give you until Monday March 7 to decide on our terms
P.S. Please remember that **we** won the war!”

1. (a) What, according to Source B, were the consequences of the Treaty of Versailles for Germany? [3]
(b) What is the message conveyed by Source E? [2]
 2. Compare and contrast the views expressed in Sources C and D about the terms of the Treaty of Versailles. [6]
 3. With reference to their origin and purpose, assess the value and limitations of Source A and Source B for historians studying the Treaty of Versailles. [6]
 4. Using the sources and your own knowledge, to what extent were the Germans justified in claiming that the terms of the Treaty of Versailles were unfair? [8]
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